

Jury Proceedings Young Talent Open 2025

The jury of the Young Talent Open 2025 - Maibritt Dammann, Ana Dana Beros, Jason O'Shaughnessy, Konstantinos Pantazis, and Daliana Suryawinata - met in Barcelona on 27 and 28 March 2025 to deliberate on the nominated projects. Before beginning the discussions, each jury member had reviewed the 64 nominated projects submitted by students from 19 schools of architecture, urban planning, and landscape architecture, located in 15 cities across 8 countries. The jury carefully considered all submissions, examining drawings, videos, and project briefs. Following their deliberations, they selected 10 projects to be awarded: 1 winner, 4 finalists, and 5 shortlisted projects.

The winning project [Poolside Politics](#) engages with architectural legacy in a highly sensitive and imaginative way. It operates with optimism and precision, focusing on what already exists, elements that are available, though often overlooked, neglected, or invisible. The project brings attention to what is possible when we work with the existing: it demonstrates that attentiveness and care can uncover opportunities and that architecture can serve as a powerful transformative tool. Rather than proposing erasure or replacement, the project reveals how transformation can emerge from what is already there. Moreover, the jury values the project's ecological dimension. It suggests that through thoughtful reuse and careful observation, we can generate new forms of value using what we already have. Poolside Politics is a compelling example of how architecture can act both critically and constructively, reimagining existing territories with intelligence and purpose.

This shared concern for the overlooked, the marginal and the abandoned becomes evident across the awarded entries. Many proposals avoid replacement in favour of reactivation, emphasising care, repair and reinvention as architectural strategies. Several of them focus specifically on the regeneration of communities through local knowledge and resources. Among them, the finalist project [The Belmonte Tomato Farmers Cooperative](#) stands out for its sensitive and situated transformation of a declining Calabrian village through the establishment of a farmers' cooperative. Emerging from immersive research and local engagement, the proposal avoids externally imposed solutions and builds instead on existing cultural practices. The jury praised its honesty and commitment to transforming the ordinary into a collective project. Similarly concerned with the entanglement of environmental and social issues, the finalist proposal of [Dynamics of an Overexploited Territory](#) proposes a masterplan for Bangka Island in Indonesia, where artisanal fishing and illegal tin mining clash. The jury highlighted the project's compelling narrative and its use of monsoon cycles as a design principle, creating dignified, vernacular infrastructure in a fragile and contested environment.

Similarly grounded in low-tech strategies and local reuse, the finalist project [Bridging the Maribyrnong](#) addresses post-industrial degradation in Melbourne through small-scale, pedagogical infrastructures attached to existing bridges. These lightweight, site-specific additions use found materials to restore ecological habitats and reconnect communities to the river. The project demonstrates how modest interventions can catalyse broader environmental restoration. Along similar lines, the shortlisted project of [To the Bricks that Built Us](#) engages

with a disappearing community of brickmakers in the Mekong Delta. The proposal combines ephemeral architectures with traditional festivals to celebrate the memory of a declining trade. The jury appreciated its poetic dimension and capacity to re-signify a fading legacy.

Other projects operate through speculation, protest and narrative imagination. The finalist project [Reimagining Urban Vernacular](#) transforms a high-tech skyscraper in Sydney into a self-built, low-tech communal shelter. Through dismantling, bricolage and climate-responsive design, the squatters reclaim the tower and redefine the very notion of shelter. The jury highlighted its evocative drawings and its ability to humanise the typology through a structural and imaginative reappropriation.

Also working through speculative fiction, the shortlisted project [Tuareg Trails of Tomorrow](#) reimagines the future of Arlit (Niger) through the revival of ancient trade routes. While the jury recognised the dramatic tone and cultural richness of the proposal, it also acknowledged its bravery in addressing a politically charged and ecologically damaged context through architectural means.

Among the shortlisted projects, [Queer Space/Protest Architecture](#) proposes a temporary occupation of a colonial square in Jakarta (Indonesia). Through ephemeral structures and performative interventions, the project asserts queer presence in public space, fostering dialogue, activism and visibility. The jury valued its courage in addressing a politically sensitive topic within a complex social context. Also dealing with contested narratives and public engagement, [Heterotopia for Urban Hacking](#) reclaims forgotten infrastructures in Ankara as layered sites of memory, storytelling and participation.

Finally, operating at the intersection of planning, regulation and public space, [Entanglement and Public Affairs](#) explores the tensions between old and new, public and private in the redevelopment of an inner Melbourne suburb. The jury considered the project original in its engagement with regulation, albeit somewhat conventional in its architectural expression.